

CLAIMS

1. A method comprising:
maintaining data about groups of persons, wherein the groups include persons associated
5 with respective requests for action, the data including information sufficient to contact members
of the groups;

providing a client interface for use of said data, by which users find and become
members of the groups; and

providing a business user interface for use of said data, by which users monitor activity
10 of groups and communicate with the groups.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the client interface comprises a page accessible
via the internet.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface comprises a page
15 accessible via the internet.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a
set of requests for action.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a
set of requests for action, selecting a particular request, and joining a group of persons associated
with the particular request.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing
25 and submitting a request for action.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing
and submitting a comment associated with a selected request for action.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for browsing a set of requests for action.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for browsing a set of requests for action, selecting a particular request, and accessing information about a group of persons associated with the particular request.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, the response including an offer of a transaction directed to satisfaction of the request for action.

12. The method of claim 11, including a tool for providing the response to members of a group associated with the particular request.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the response includes a tool by which a member of the group that receives the offer indicates acceptance or rejection of the offer.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the response includes a tool by which a member of the group that receives the offer indicates a level of satisfaction with the offer.

15. The method of claim 1, including providing a system by which requests for action are approved by a person having authority, prior to being made visible in the client interface.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, and including providing a system by which the response to the particular request is approved by a person having authority, and after approval, the response is sent to members of a group associated with the particular request prior to being sent to members of the group.

17. The method of claim 1, including providing a system by which comments associated with requests for action are approved by a person having authority, prior to being made visible in the client interface.

5 18. The method of claim 1, wherein said data comprises a node-link structure, including nodes for requests for action arranged in a hierarchy, the nodes for requests for action being linked with nodes for groups, which are linked with nodes for members of groups which are linked to nodes for responses submitted to groups.

10 19. The method of claim 1, including providing a user a response to a request for action in response to an event by which the user becomes a member of a particular group associated with the request for action.

15 20. The method of claim 1, wherein the client interface includes a tool allowing a user to indicate an attitude about a particular request for action, other than would be expressed solely by joining in the particular request for action.

20 21. The method of claim 1, wherein said client interface provides for displaying a page relating to requests for action determined based upon a context from which the user enters the client interface.

25 22. The method of claim 1, including providing a response to members of a group associated with a particular request for action, wherein the response includes an offer which can be accepted, and if the offer is accepted, then linking the member to a transactional page supporting satisfaction of the accepted offer.

30 23. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, including monitoring history of delivery of a particular response to users, and managing subsequent delivery of the particular response based on said history.

24. The method of claim 1, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, the response including a particular offer of a transaction directed to satisfaction of the request for action, and including monitoring history of delivery of the particular offer to users, and managing subsequent delivery of the particular offer based upon said history.

25. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests.

26. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including categories and sub-categories for requests.

27. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and providing for notifying users of the business interface that have selected a particular category for tracking about events relevant to the particular category.

28. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and wherein said client interface provides for displaying a page including information about categories for requests determined based upon a context from which the user enters the client interface.

29. The method of claim 1, including providing for notifying users of the business interface that have selected a particular request for action for tracking, about events relevant to the particular request for action.

30. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and providing for indicating a selected category to be tracked by a particular user, and wherein the business interface includes a mechanism by which a particular user is presented information about said selected category.

31. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests, and providing a response to a particular request for action also to a sub-request associated by the data model with the particular request for action.

32. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests, and providing a response to a particular sub-request also to a request for action associated by the data model with the particular sub-request.

33. The method of claim 1, including organizing said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests.

34. A system comprising:
a data base including data about groups of persons, wherein the groups include persons associated with respective requests for action, the data including information sufficient to contact members of the groups;
a server coupled to a communication network, including:
resources to provide a client interface for use of said data via the communication network, by which users find and become members of the groups; and
resources to provide a business user interface for use of said data via the communication network, by which business users monitor activity of groups and communicate with the groups.

35. The system of claim 34, wherein the client interface comprises a page accessible via the internet.

36. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface comprises a page accessible via the internet.

37. The system of claim 34, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a set of requests for action.

38. The system of claim 34, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a set of requests for action, selecting a particular request, and joining a group of persons associated with the particular request.

5 39. The system of claim 34, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a request for action.

40. The system of claim 34, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a comment associated with a selected request for action.

10 41. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for browsing a set of requests for action.

15 42. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for browsing a set of requests for action, selecting a particular request, and accessing information about a group of persons associated with the particular request.

20 43. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action.

44. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, the response including an offer directed to satisfaction of the request for action.

25 45. The system of claim 44, including a tool for providing the response to members of a group associated with the particular request.

30 46. The system of claim 45, wherein the response includes a tool by which a member of the group that receives the offer indicates acceptance or rejection of the offer.

47. The system of claim 45, wherein the response includes a tool by which a member of the group that receives the offer indicates a level of satisfaction with the offer.

48. The system of claim 34, including providing a system by which requests for action are approved by a person having authority, prior to being made visible in the client interface.

49. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, and including resources by which the response to the particular request is approved by a person having authority, and after approval, the response is sent to members of a group associated with the particular request prior to being sent to members of the group.

50. The system of claim 34, including resources by which comments associated with requests for action are approved by a person having authority, prior to being made visible in the client interface.

51. The system of claim 34, wherein said data comprises a node-link structure, including nodes for requests for action arranged in a hierarchy, the nodes for requests for action being linked with nodes for groups, which are linked with nodes for members of groups which are linked to nodes for responses submitted to groups.

52. The system of claim 34, including resources to provide a user a response to a request for action in response to an event by which the user becomes a member of a particular group associated with the request for action.

53. The system of claim 34, wherein the client interface includes a tool allowing a user to indicate an attitude about a particular request for action, other than would be expressed solely by joining in the particular request for action.

54. The system of claim 34, wherein said client interface includes a tool for displaying a page relating to requests for action determined based upon a context from which the user enters the client interface.

5 55. The system of claim 34, including resources providing a response to members of a group associated with a particular request for action, wherein the response includes an offer which can be accepted, and if the offer is accepted, then linking the member to a transactional page supporting satisfaction of the accepted offer.

10 56. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, including resources monitoring history of delivery of a particular response to users, and managing subsequent delivery of the particular response based on said history.

15 57. The system of claim 34, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, the response including a particular offer of a transaction directed to satisfaction of the request for action, and including resources monitoring history of delivery of the particular offer to users, and managing subsequent delivery of the particular offer based upon said history.

20 58. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests.

25 59. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories and sub-categories for requests.

30 60. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and including resources providing for notifying users of the business interface that have selected a particular category for tracking about events relevant to the particular category.

61. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and wherein said client interface provides for displaying a page including information about categories for requests determined based upon a context from which the user enters the client interface.

62. The system of claim 34, including resources providing for notifying users of the business interface that have selected a particular request for action for tracking, about events relevant to the particular request for action.

63. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and including resources providing for indicating a selected category to be tracked by a particular user, and wherein the business interface includes a mechanism by which a particular user is presented information about said selected category.

64. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests, and including resources providing a response to a particular request for action also to a sub-request associated by the data model with the particular request for action.

65. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests, and including resources providing a response to a particular sub-request also to a request for action associated by the data model with the particular sub-request.

66. The system of claim 34, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests.

67. An article of manufacture comprising:
a machine readable data storage medium storing computer program instructions, which upon execution establish a data base including data about groups of persons, wherein the groups

include persons associated with a request for action, the data including information sufficient to contact members of the groups; and

resources to provide a client interface for use of said data via the communication network, by which users find and become members of the groups; and

resources to provide a business user interface for use of said data via the communication network, by which business users monitor activity of groups and communicate with the groups.

68. The article of claim 67, wherein the client interface comprises a page accessible via the internet.

69. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface comprises a page accessible via the internet.

70. The article of claim 67, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a set of requests for action.

71. The article of claim 67, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a set of requests for action, selecting a particular request, and joining a group of persons associated with the particular request.

72. The article of claim 67, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a request for action.

73. The article of claim 67, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a comment associated with a selected request for action.

74. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for browsing a set of requests for action.

75. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for browsing a set of requests for action, selecting a particular request, and accessing information about a group of persons associated with the particular request.

5 76. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action.

77. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, the response including an offer directed to satisfaction of the request for action.

78. The article of claim 77, wherein the computer program instructions include a tool for providing the response to members of a group associated with the particular request.

15 79. The article of claim 78, wherein the response includes a tool by which a member of the group that receives the offer indicates acceptance or rejection of the offer.

80. The article of claim 78, wherein the response includes a tool by which a member of the group that receives the offer indicates a level of satisfaction with the offer.

20 81. The article of claim 67, wherein the computer program instructions include resources by which requests for action are approved by a person having authority indicated in the data, prior to being made visible in the client interface.

25 82. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, and wherein the computer program instructions include resources providing a system by which the response to the particular request is approved by a person having authority indicated in the data, and after approval, the response is sent to members of a group associated with the particular request prior to being sent to members of the group.

83. The article of claim 67, wherein the computer program instructions include a system by which comments associated with requests for action are approved by a person having authority indicated in the data, prior to being made visible in the client interface.

5 84. The article of claim 67, wherein said data comprises a node-link structure, including nodes for requests for action arranged in a hierarchy, the nodes for requests for action being linked with nodes for groups, which are linked with nodes for members of groups which are linked to nodes for responses submitted to groups.

10 85. The article of claim 67, wherein the computer program instructions include logic to provide a user a response to a request for action in response to an event by which the user becomes a member of a particular group associated with the request for action.

15 86. The article of claim 67, wherein the client interface includes a tool allowing a user to indicate an attitude about a particular request for action, other than joining in the particular request for action.

20 87. The article of claim 67, wherein said client interface provides for displaying a page relating to said requests for action determined based upon a context from which the user enters the client interface.

25 88. The article of claim 67, wherein the computer program instructions include logic to provide a response to members of a group associated with a particular request for action, wherein the response includes an offer which can be accepted, and if the offer is accepted, then linking the member to a transactional page supporting satisfaction of the accepted offer.

30 89. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, the computer program instructions including logic to monitor history of delivery of a particular response to users, and managing subsequent delivery of the particular response based on said history.

90. The article of claim 67, wherein the business user interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a response to a particular request for action, the response including a particular offer of a transaction directed to satisfaction of the request for action, the computer program instructions including logic to monitor history of delivery of the particular offer to users, and to manage subsequent delivery of the particular offer based upon said history.

91. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests.

92. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories and sub-categories for requests.

93. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and the computer program instructions include logic to provide for notifying users of the business interface that have selected a particular category for tracking about events relevant to the particular category.

94. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and wherein said client interface provides for displaying a page including information about categories for requests determined based upon a context from which the user enters the client interface.

95. The article of claim 67, the computer program instructions including logic to provide for notifying users of the business interface that have selected a particular request for action for tracking about events relevant to the particular request for action.

96. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including categories for requests, and the computer program instructions include logic to provide for indicating a selected category to be tracked by a particular user, and wherein the business interface includes a mechanism by which a particular user is presented information about said selected category.

97. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests, and the computer program instructions including logic to provide a response to a particular request for action also to a sub-request associated by the data model with the particular request for action.

98. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests, and the computer program instructions include logic to provide a response to a particular sub-request also to a request for action associated by the data model with the particular sub-request.

99. The article of claim 67, wherein said database organizes said requests for action according to a data model including requests and sub-requests.

100. A method comprising:

- maintaining data about groups of persons, wherein the groups include persons associated with a request for action, the data including information sufficient to contact members of the groups;
- presenting an interface to a network, the interface including an information model by which users of the interface find and become members of one or more of the groups;
- providing tools to users in the network by which requests for action are approved for use in formation of a group;
- providing a response to members of a particular group based on the request for action associated with the particular group, the response including an offer of a transaction directed to satisfaction of the request for action; and
- providing tools to members in the particular group that view the response to indicate acceptance of the offer in the response.

101. The method of claim 100, including:

- providing a tool by which users track events relevant to a selected group.

102. The method of claim 100, wherein the tool by which users track events include a screen on which information about activity of the selected group are presented for analysis.

103. The method of claim 100, including a tool to direct members that indicate acceptance of the offer to a transactional page supporting satisfaction of the accepted offer.

104. A method comprising:
maintaining data about groups of persons, wherein the groups include persons associated with a request for action, the data including information sufficient to contact members of the groups; and
providing a client interface for use of said data, by which users find and become members of the groups.

105. The method of claim 104, wherein the client interface comprises a page accessible via the internet.

106. The method of claim 104, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a set of requests for action.

107. The method of claim 104, wherein the client interface includes tools for browsing a set of requests for action, selecting a particular request, and joining a group of persons associated with the particular request.

108. The method of claim 104, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a request for action.

109. The method of claim 104, wherein the client interface includes a tool for composing and submitting a comment associated with a selected request for action.